

# Stafford News Letter.

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GORDON M. FISK & CO.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.—Two Dollars a year; in advance. Single copies, five cents. ADVERTISEMENTS.—Inserted at the following rates:—One square, one week, \$1; 25 cents per square, per week, for each week after the first. One square, one year, without charge, \$12. One-half square, one year, \$7. Legal advertising, \$1.75 per square for three insertions. Notices in editorial columns, 25 cents per line; no charge less than \$1. Obituaries, 5 cents per line; no charge less than 25 cents. Notices of funerals, under the head of "Deaths," 25 cents each. Special notices, before marriage and death, \$3 per cent. advance of regular rates. The space occupied by ten times solid column type constitutes a square. To merchants advertising in this business at above rates discounts will be made of ten per cent. on yearly bills of \$50, fifteen per cent. on bills of \$75, and twenty-five per cent. on bills of \$100 and over.

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WARE.

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WM. MCKINSTRY, Merchant Tailor and Manufacturer of Custom Clothing, opposite the Bank.

WM. O. GOULD, Dealer in Millinery of all kinds, Desmond's Block, Main street, up stairs.

WHAT NEXT?—The latest production of American inventive genius is a "mountache spoon," especially designed to enable mounted gentlemen to eat soup without soiling their hairy honors. This mysterious spoon has a bridge over the center, which supports the mountache in its passage over the savory food. The bridge may be made permanent or removable, and can be attached in a few minutes and by any common mechanical device. Better give them a bottle with a rubber cap, for the next thing.

Of the large number of battle flags captured from the rebels, two hundred and five now adorn the War Department.

A Scene.

Oh! I have gazed intently on the form Of fading beauty; on the eye that sparkled With beams of coming dissolution; on The lips that quivered, as the half-form'd accents Met the listening ear, in mournful silence. Ah! there was something in her very being That told she was not formed to dwell on earth; A heavenly radiance beamed brightly from her eye— An angel smile played on her lovely face, And even now, in death, each beautiful grace Was doubled, as she waited on the verge Of earth, and gazed on heaven. Her dark blue eye Was fixed; and yet it seemed to say, "Behold A brighter world!" Her lips moved as in prayer. With aspect mild, revived, she turned her head, And, with a most exquisite smile, she bade A last "farewell!" and then, without a groan, Expired.

There stood around her dying bed Her loved companions, gazing on their friend; They wept the last adieu, and, silent, looked Upon each other. 'Twas a lovely scene Of tender sorrow; and I almost wished That I had been the dying friend they mourned. PALMER, Jan., 1865. J. M. COVINS.

A CITY UNDER GROUND.

Beneath the city of Virginia, Cal., is an underground city, more interesting to the visitor than all the other cities of the golden State.

Few think, as they walk the busy streets of Virginia, that beneath their feet are streets almost as busy; that, far down in the ever present midnight of the foundations of the mountains, are crowds of men, toiling, as toil those above, for gold and for bread. Many things to gratify the eye and afford food for the mind may be met with during a stroll through our streets above—our bright, sunlit streets. Let none conclude that there is nothing to be found to please the eye or excite reflection in our streets below—our dark, lighted streets. Descending at the Chollar works, by a perpendicular shaft over four hundred feet in depth, one may wander off in almost any direction. By two or three different roads, we might travel eastward nearly half a mile, finally coming out to the light of day in the southeastern suburbs of the city, among mills and miners' cabins; but we will take another course. Leaving the village of the Chollarites, we travel northward. Along the sides of the narrow streets are glimmering lights—some twinkling far ahead like distant stars, and others flashing suddenly upon us, as we turn the corners, with a blinding influence of light. As we proceed on our journey, we meet with many picturesque groups of miners at their labor. Here they are delving out chambers in the precious silver rock, and there hoisting into place the stout timbers that are to support the mountain and the city above. We pass through rocky caverns, whose space robs our minds of light, and in whose walls yawn dark galleries, leading we know not whither, and about and within whose black portals crouch pyrites and brilliant quartz crystals flash back the light of our candles in a thousand merry glow-worm twinkles. After passing through the subterranean villages of diverse mining companies, we come to the thriving settlement of the Savage people. Having halted in their hospitable hamlet long enough to hear the latest underground news, and to make some inquiries relative to our road to the next village, the home of the Gould & Curry tribe, we take our leave and pursue our journey. Of course, we see many wonders, meet with numerous adventures, and encounter more than one solitary traveler—though not a "solitary horseman,"—walk on the brink of more than one yawning chasm, and experience numerous and mixed sensations, but finally reach the Gould & Curry clan in safety. We find them quite a civilized people. Although more than four hundred feet below the streets of the city, we here find a large building, with a huge steam engine in its puffing away as comfortably as though there was no surface to the earth, with green trees, singing birds, and the bright sun shining upon all and everywhere. We enter the building, take a seat, sip a glass of champagne, light a cigar, and, as we watch its curling smoke mingling with the white wreaths of steam from the hissing engine, wonder whether we are really within the earth or upon it. Lamps are burning upon the walls; persons are passing through the room in which we are seated, are going down stairs, coming up stairs, bustling in every direction—a new face each minute. We appear to have stumbled upon the gnomes. We find, in passing through the village, that the people here have railroads running in every direction; and, as in the world above, we have to clear the track for the rushing trains, that, with fiery eyes, dart wrathfully out from dark and lonesome roads. With a "whizz" the cars fly past us, and speed away down along what seems one of the dreary lanes to Satan's sooty kingdom—a by-way leading straight into the centre of his smoking capital. About us we occasionally hear the splashing of water, mingled with creaking sounds, and pass through places where air strikes damp and cold upon our cheeks to enter where it is hot and stifling. Suddenly, peals of thunder burst over our heads, and every gallery and cavern echoes its roar. Our nerves are soon quieted, for we know that the noise was but the discharge of a ton or two of ore through some of the chutes above. There are inhabitants far above us, toward the surface of the earth—the place is like a huge ant-hill. Again, upon a sudden, our ears are rent by an explosion—above, below—somewhere, which causes us, for a moment, to suppose that the earth has burst in its center and is no longer a thing of substantiality. We know that it was but a blast which thus caused the whole place to shudder, and smile at our late nervousness. There are many roads leading from the Gould & Curry claim, and we might travel half a mile in several directions, but we will continue our journey northward and rise to the surface at the works of Best & Belcher, through a shaft some four hundred feet in depth. Here we landed, nearly on a mile north of where we descended. Our underground highways are being extended daily in every direction, and will soon be connected with those of Gold Hill mines, and these again with those of American Flat. In a very few years more, there will be miles on miles of these subterranean streets meandering under and running from one to another of our cities.

A LADY SMOTHERS A SOLDIER IN A TRUNK.

A Norfolk correspondent writes:—Philadelphia Press describes the closing scene of the celebrated trunk tragedy, resulting in the conviction and sentence of Maria Louisa Linder for aiding in the desertion of the soldier John Freeborn. The following account of the proceedings in the Court will give an idea of the character of the affair, which resulted in the death of Freeborn:

Q. Now state to the court all you know about the trunk affair.

The woman here became greatly affected and wept bitterly, but in a short time continued her evidence: John Freeborn told me that he was tired of the army, and that if I would get him to Chicago he would give me four hundred dollars. I asked him how he would be able to get so much money. He said he was going to jump the bounty and get a thousand dollars, and then we would both go to Canada and get married. I told him that I would not know how to get him away from here, for the government men watched everything so closely. He said "Go and buy a large trunk, and I will get it in, and you can do with me just as though I were your clothing. You can check me to Baltimore, and then get in the cars and go to Chicago." I did not like to do it but he made me; so I got the trunk, and he then got in it, we went on board the Baltimore boat.

Q. By Judge Webster. Did he not say anything about smothering?

A. Yes, and he cut a small hole in the trunk. (Here the trunk was shown. It is a large handsome one, about twenty-five inches high sixteen inches broad, and thirty-two inches long. Immediately beneath one of the straps is seen a very small orifice, through which the deceased gained his breath by means of a pipe-stem. It would be almost impossible to detect the orifice unless it was pointed out. The hole would not admit the passage of air sufficient to sustain animation in a rat. There is room within the trunk to allow a limited use of the limbs, but they would necessarily be contracted to such an extent as to produce a violent cramp, after a person had been subjected for a period of five hours. He did not think there would be any difficulty in breathing through the stem of the pipe which he used.)

When I got to Fortress Monroe, I went up to the trunk and kicked it twice. That was the sign by which I was to know how he was getting on. He answered it twice, so that I knew it was all right. He had no liquor in the trunk nothing but a canteen of water, a towel, and a piece of chewing tobacco.

When I got to Baltimore I ordered a hackman to take me to a hotel. I do not know which one it was, I was so anxious to get there. When I got to the hotel I went up stairs and had the trunk brought up with me, and then when we got into the room I locked the door. I was so glad when I got there that I kicked the trunk with all my might, but I got no answer. I said "Now, Johnny you are all right." He did not answer me and I thought he was fooling me.

I got the key and opened the trunk, and he lay perfectly still, when I said, "Come Jack, get up; you are in Baltimore now, and no one is about here but me." He said nothing when I put my hand upon his face, and he was dead. [The woman was here so overcome with her feelings that it was some minutes before she could proceed.] I dropped the lid of the trunk and "was crazy in my head." I saw a card on the mantel piece of the room, and I wrote the word "Chicago," on it and rang immediately for a servant.

He got me a hackman and I told him I wanted to go right away to Chicago. He said he would take me to the Calvert street station for two dollars. I told him I would give him that, and handed him a five dollar bill, when he gave me back three dollars. He put the trunk behind the carriage, and when we got to the depot he asked me if I wanted it checked; I told him yes. He said "Go and get your ticket and I will get it checked for you." I was scared almost to death; I never felt so funny before in my life. I wanted it found out, and I hadn't the heart to tell any one. I went to get my ticket, and instead of doing so, I walked up the street. I do not know what made me but I couldn't help it. I saw a policeman coming down near me and I wanted to tell him, but I did not know how. I walked the streets all night; no one said anything to me, and I did not say a word to any one.

The next morning I heard some one say something about a trunk, and I thanked God that it had been found out. I walked the streets all the morning, and finally I felt so bad that I went and told on myself. This was all done upon the moment. I was perfectly crazy after I found out that the soldier was dead.

This is the major part of the evidence, which I give nearly as taken down by the reporter. There is no doubt whatever that the woman is in a state of intense misery. Her opinion, from the moment of her first exit until now, has been that she would be hung. But, as a matter of course, it was not a case of murder. On the part of the woman it was aiding and abetting the act of desertion. The fact of the man's having died does not alter the punishment which is due the woman.

Judge Webster, after having consulted with Gen. Stanley upon the sentence, returned to the court room, and sentenced her to a fine of five hundred dollars and two years' imprisonment at hard labor.

Let there be plenty of sunlight in your house. Don't be afraid of it. God floods the world with light, and it costs you an effort to keep it out. You want it as much as plants, which grow sickly without it. It is necessary to the health, spirits, good nature and happy influence. Let the sunlight stream freely in.

A dull person does some things better than a man of genius; as an ivory paper folder cuts the leaves of books better than a keen blade.

It is a great mistake to think that the majority are always in the right. They were not in the matter of the flood—and they've been wrong several times since.

THE STRASBURG CLOCK.

The priest and military have retired, and I am now sitting in my chair, facing the gigantic clock—from the bottom to the top not less than one hundred feet, and about thirty feet wide and fifteen deep. Around me are many strangers, waiting to see the working of this clock as it strikes the hour of noon. Every eye is upon the clock. It now wants five minutes to twelve. The clock has struck and the people are gone, except a few whom the sexton or head man, with a wand and sword, is conducting round the building.

The clock has struck in this way: The dial is some twenty feet from the floor; on each side is a chernob or a little boy, with a mallet, and over the dial is a small bell; the chernob on the left strikes the first quarter, and that on the right the second quarter. Some fifty feet above the dial is a large niche, is a huge figure of Time, a bell in his left and a scythe in his right hand. In front stands a figure of a young man with a mallet, who strikes the third quarter on the hand of Time, and then turns and glides, with slow step, around behind Time; and then comes out an old man with a mallet, and places himself in front.

At the hour of twelve comes, the old man raises his mallet and deliberately strikes twelve times on the bell, that echoes through the building and is heard all around in the region of the church. Soon as the old man has struck twelve and disappeared, another set of machinery is put in motion, some twenty feet higher still. It is this: There is a high cross, with the image of Christ on it. The instant twelve is struck, one of the apostles walks out from behind, comes in front, turns, facing the cross, bows, and walks on around to his place.

As he does so, another comes out in front, turns, bows, and passes in. So twelve apostles, figure as large as life, walk round, bow, and pass on. As the last apostle, an enormous clock, perched on the pinnacle of the cross, slowly flaps his wings, stretches forth his neck, and crows three times, so loud as to be heard to some distance, and so naturally as to be mistaken for a real cock. Then all is silent as death. No wonder this clock is the admiration of Europe. It was made in 1571, and has performed these mechanical wonders ever since, except for about fifty years, when it stood out of repair.

HOME AFFECTIONS.

The heart has memories that can never die. The rough rubs of the world—the cold, unfeeling, selfish world—cannot obliterate them. It makes no difference how we may be tossed about upon life's turbid and tempestuous stream, these memories still live with us, and often times steal in upon our saddest emotions. They are memories of home—early home!—Dear, hallowed spot! what magic in the sound! And, as our mind wanders back, far away the misty past, how many tender memories upon us. There is the old tree, under which the light-hearted school-boy swung in many a summer day; yonder the river in which he learned to swim; there the house in which he knew a parent's love and a parent's protection; and hard by is the old church, whither, with a joyous troop like him, he followed his parents to worship and hear the good old man who gave him to God in baptism. Why, even the old school-house, with its dark old walls, which, in youthful days, impressed him with such awe, associated, as they were, with thoughts of ferule and tasks, comes back to bring pleasant remembrances of the "far long ago." There he learned to feel some of his best emotions; and there, perchance, he first met the being who, by her love and tenderness in after life, has made a home for himself, happier even than that which his childhood knew. Oh! these are memories which linger around our hearts, ever and anon dispelling joy and sunshine athwart our checkered pathway—memories which the cares of the world can never obliterate. Often, in the busy whirl of life, they present themselves, and we involuntarily sigh for our boyhood days, when "life seemed formed of summer dreams." But they come not; they are ours no longer; upon the wings of the morning they have fled from us forever. Dear home of our childhood! since we left thy sacred precincts, how many disappointments and sorrows have crowded upon us; and how many more will overtake us during our pilgrimage through life we cannot tell, for the future is a sealed scroll, and we know not what is folded there, whether joy or sorrow, sunshine or shadow.

HOW THE NEGROES CAME IN.—The Milwaukee Wisconsin has accounts from Sherman's army from which we copy the following:—

Every town and plantation which we passed was depopulated of negroes, who came to us in crowds, bringing with them women and children, and the maimed and blind, old and young, the octogenarian and the suckling babe, swelled our ranks. It was amusing to see the motley character of this black crowd. Some in caris drawn by oxen or mules; others in master's best buggy; some on donkeys and mules, or horse; many on the old "cast-off" train mules, which they had picked up on the way; whilst the largest portion were on foot, packing feather beds, heavy iron pots and kettles, or old deal boxes, containing the accumulations of their lives. Even old split bottomed chairs were packed on the backs of some; and all the rubbish of a negro's quarters was to be encountered. One cart, drawn by a pair of lean broken-down oxen, contained no less than nineteen pickaninies; the oldest of these was not over three years; and about them were packed everything to be found in a plantation negro's cabin. The anxious mothers walked in procession on each side of the cart, endeavoring to hush the squallings of the brood.

Edwin Forrest, the actor, has built in addition to his elegant house in Philadelphia, a private theatre, which he proposes to dedicate to the education of poor boys and girls in recitation and declamation, and to fit for the stage all such as have any ambition for that profession.

The Prince of Wales is said, finds it uphill work to live on his present annual State allowance, £40,000.

We promise according to our hopes, we perform according to our fears.

FREE MASONRY.

MR. EDITOR:—Having, in our former article, demurred to the reasoning of your contemporary in relation to the origin and antiquity of Free Masonry, allow me now to quote a few words from an "author of the craft" in relation to the antiquity of the order: "The opinion, therefore, of Free Masons, that their order existed and flourished at the building of Solomon's Temple, is, by no means, so pregnant with absurdity as some men would wish us to believe." It can be shown, from authentic sources of information, that the mysteries of Ceres were instituted about four hundred years before the reign of King Solomon; and there are strong reasons for believing that even the association of the Dionysian Architects existed before the building of the temple. We are informed by Josephus (Book 8, Chap. 5, Jewish Antiquities) that this species of architecture was used at the building of the temple; and, after the erection and dedication of that edifice, there existed an association of men resembling Free Masons in the nature, ceremonies, and objects of their institution. When a candidate was proposed for initiation, the strictest scrutiny was made into his character. If his life had been regular and exemplary, and he was capable of subduing his passions, he was presented with a white garment, as an emblem of purity. A solemn obligation was then administered to him; and, like Free Masons, he orally instructed the younger members in the unwritten work which they had derived from their ancestors. They admitted no women into their order. They had particular signs whereby they could recognize each other. They had no distinctions of mere external rank or wealth for which they respected their members, and preference was only given for piety and virtue. This, surely, very much like the teachings of Free Masonry at the present day; as witness a portion of one of the charges at initiation: "At your leisure hours, that you may improve in Masonic knowledge, you are to converse with well-informed brethren, who will be always ready to give you as you will be ready to receive instruction." Also, no women can be permitted to join a Lodge of Free Masons. Free Masons have particular signs of recognition; and in the lodge-room, and in all Masonic teachings, all ranks are levelled, and only those are most respected who, without reference to surroundings, endeavor to erect their spiritual building agreeably to the rules and designs laid down by the Supreme Architect of the universe, in the great books of nature and revelation, which is our spiritual, moral, and Masonic, treasure-board." When the nature, the object, and the forms of two institutions are precisely the same, the arguments for their identity are something more than presumptive.

But, without examining further, in detail, the order at the present time, allow me to say that there are records of a Lodge now or recently existing at Kilwinning, Scotland, which, by satisfactory documentary evidence, can be traced to the fifteenth century; so that the claim that the order was founded in the seventeenth century is clearly fallacious.

In the opinion of one writer, Free Masonry was invented and employed by the adherents of the king; by another, it was devised by the friends of Parliament; while others claim that it was founded by the Jesuits, for the promotion of their spiritual tyranny and superstition; and still others maintain that it arose among a number of unprincipled skeptics, who employed it for destroying the spiritual tyranny and superstition of the Jesuits. With these diverse authors and thinkers, is it not wonderful that men should differ in their opinions relative to the antiquity and benefits of the order? We think not; but we are still all candid minds should examine, read, and criticize the written works of the order, satisfied that such candid perusal would prove the claim of Free Masons to the antiquity and moral worth of the order; while all bigots and one-sided men, on finding that neither politics or religion are allowed to be discussed in the lodge-room, would, undoubtedly, retire in disgust; and, lest your readers should do the same with this article, on account of its length, we will close. Respectfully,

NEMO.

MARRIAGE BAROMETER.—An important discovery has been made by some statistical genius in Chicago, which conclusively proves that marriage, like all other commercial transactions, is controlled by the weather. The Chicago Journal has the following as an excuse for excessive matrimony in that little town:—

"The 'oldest inhabitant' has no recollection of such a wintery November as the present month. Keen winds, cutting and cold came hand in hand with November, and have seldom parted company since their advent. The terrible effect of such a state of things is apparent in the matrimonial market. The number of marriage licenses issued this month already reaches two hundred and three, against one hundred and eighty-two for the corresponding period last month and one hundred and forty-five in August."

RATHER SOLD.—On Saturday night last, says an exchange, a young man went into a store with a large three-quart pitcher, which he got filled with cider. As he was coming out he met a woman at the door, who informed him that she had sickness in the family, and was under the necessity of procuring "some whiskey for family use." She did not like to go into the store after it, she said, on account of the number of men inside, and would be much obliged to him if he would make the purchase for her. He said that he should be glad to do so, but that he had no money with him; whereupon the woman produced ten cents, with which he went in and purchased the liquor. When he came out, he was somewhat surprised to find the woman, the pitcher, and the cider all missing. He had ten cents' worth of cheap whiskey to show for five or six shillings' worth of cider and a pitcher! He thinks he shan't be in a hurry to help another woman to a "little whiskey for family use," unless he can keep his eye on the cider at the same time.

Voltaire's heart has been presented to a museum at Paris. It had been kept for a long time as a curiosity by a family into whose possession it had come.

THE TEMPERANCE QUESTION.

MR. EDITOR:—I see that the much-vaunted question of temperance is again being agitated in the public prints. One writer in the Springfield Republic recommends the repeal of the prohibitory liquor law, and a return to the license system, to which the Republican adds a hearty amen. Now, with your permission, I wish to say a word upon the subject of licensing the sale of intoxicating drinks. If such sale be an evil what possible advantage can be gained by so doing? Will the licensed rum-seller inflict less injury upon the community than he would if pursuing the same unholy business without a license? Will the enemy which a man puts in his mouth to steal away his brains be deprived of any of its powers for mischief by the magic of a license? Will the evils of intemperance be any the less bitter because they are produced through the agency of a legalized traffic? Will it be any consolation to the broken-hearted wife and mother to know that the man who has made her worse than a widow had been duly licensed to make her husband a drunkard? Where, then, will be the benefit of a return to the license system?

But these advocates of the license law say, "The prohibitory law fails to prevent the sale of liquors; therefore, it had better be repealed, and a law passed granting licenses for such sale." The law against stealing and counterfeiting does not prevent the commission of those crimes; by a parity of reasoning, therefore, we might advocate the repeal of those laws, and the passage of a law granting licenses for stealing and counterfeiting. Why not? Is not the rum-seller as bad as the thief or the counterfeiter? The great poet of nature tells us that—

"He who steals my purse steals trash—'tis something, nothing; 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thieves; But he who filches from me my good name, Robs me of that which cannot enrich him, And makes me poor indeed."

The thief only takes money or property without an equivalent; while the rum-seller not only takes the money of his victim "for that which is not bread," but he "filches from him his good name, and makes him poor indeed." And how does the rum-seller compare with the counterfeiter? The one counterfeits a bank bill; the other counterfeits God's image—the one passes a counterfeit dollar; the other palms off a counterfeit man!

The law used to require a man who applied for a license to bring a certificate of good moral character; and then he was licensed to sell for the public good! Just think of it—a man licensed to make drunkards for the public good! Methinks if there is anything that would make the devil laugh, it would be the passage of such a law. It has been said that "revolutions never go backward." I hope that in this crisis of the temperance war, we will not be thrown back to the old system.

Let not the evils of the law be thrown around the business of rum-selling, to shield it from the indignation of all good men.

"Let it find No refuge from the withering curse Of God and human kind."

MONROE, Jan. 10, 1865.

RATHER CORNERED.—Two young ladies says a correspondent were singing a duet in a concert room. A stranger, who had heard better performances, turned to his neighbor saying:—

"Does not the lady in white sing wretchedly?"

"Excuse me sir," replied he, I hardly feel at liberty to express my sentiments being impartial to the case; it is my sister."

"I beg your pardon," sir," answered the stranger in much confusion, "I meant the lady in blue."

"You are right there," replied the neighbor, "I have often told her so myself; it is my wife."

NEVER DID SO.—A New Hampshire farmer wanted a farm hand and was applied to by an Irishman, who wished to be taken on. The farmer objected to engaging Pat, on the ground that two Irishmen previously in his employ had died on his hands. "Thin ye object to hiring me for that, do ye?" said Pat. "Faith, and I can bring ye recommendations from many a place where I've worked, that I never played such a trick!"

A JUVENILE WARRIOR OF EXPERIENCE.—The town of Swansey in New Hampshire is the home of George B. Mattoon, a young man, only eighteen years old, who has served in the Union army three years, been in forty-three battles and twenty-seven skirmishes, had two horses shot under him, and during that time has not received a single injury nor been absent from duty a single day.

ADVICE GRATIS.—Josh Billing's advice to a young lady as to how she shall receive a proposal: "You ought to take it kind, looking down hill, with an expression about half tickled and half scared. After the pop over, if your lover wants to kiss you, I don't think I would say yes or no, but let the thing kind or take its own course. There is one thing I have stuck to, and that is, give me long courtships and short engagements."

NEW WAY TO FATTEN CATTLE.—Experiments in fattening beef cattle for the army have recently been made at Alexandria, which demonstrate most clearly the superior qualities for such purposes of damaged hard bread and hay mixed together, and subjected to a considerable pressure of steam, which essentially removes all mold and sourness. Beef is fattened in this manner more